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### III.—A POINT IN THE INTERPRETATION OF THE ANTIGONE OF SOPHOCLES.

The thought which underlies this paper is the conviction that in the *Antigone*, so far as the main issue of the play is concerned, Sophocles meant to represent *Antigone* as wholly sinless and *Creon* as completely in the wrong. Though *Antigone* suffered, even unto death, her suffering is no proof of guilt. Ere the deed was done which caused her death, she spoke of herself, rightly, as about to die, if die she must, *ὅσια πανουργήσασα* (74). Again, when the deed had been done, when, apparently, there was none to take her part, at least openly, nevertheless, unhesitatingly and rightly, as the guards led her away to death, she cried, *λεύσσετε . . . οἷα . . . πάσχω, τὴν εἰσεβίαν σεβίσασα* (940-943). *Kreon's* suffering, on the other hand, the poet meant us to regard as the proper outcome of sin.

For effective presentations, from certain points of view, of these ideas reference may be made to Jebb's discussion in the Introduction to his edition of the *Antigone* (2nd edition, Cambridge, 1891), to Professor M. W. Humphreys' edition of the *Antigone*, pages xliii-xlviii (New York, 1891), and to the brief, but excellent treatment in James Adam's *The Religious Teachers of Greece*, 164-166, 168 (2nd edition, Edinburgh, 1909). The purpose of the present paper is to call attention to certain evidence in support of these ideas which, so far as I know, has never been presented in their support. I have in mind a recurrent *φρήν* or *φρονεῖν* motif in the *Antigone*, the consideration of which will, I hope, leave no doubt that the analysis given above of the poet's purpose is correct. Anticipating what I hope to show, I may say here that a subtitle to the play might well be *Φρόνημα Versus 'Αφροσύνη*, Right Thinking Versus Wrong Thinking, Wisdom Versus Folly, or, True Wisdom is it to Obey God rather than Man.

This motif makes its appearance early. In 43, 45-47, *Antigone* reveals to *Ismene* her intention of burying *Polynices*, spite of *Kreon's* prohibition (43). This brings from *Ismene*

an impassioned plea (49-68), which begins thus (49-50): 'Ah me, think, sister mine, think (*φρόνησον*) how our father perished hated and with evil name',<sup>1</sup> etc. The injunction 'Think', 'Think' occurs, then, within the first fifty verses; it rings through the play, in terms or by implication, over and over; in the twenty-six words with which the chorus brings the tragedy to a close (1347-1353) *φρονεῖν* occurs twice.<sup>2</sup> This injunction 'Think', 'Think' is from the outset the keynote of the play; the sequel is to show which of the protagonists, Antigone or Kreon, gives to it due heed.

In the light of verses 49-50, reinforced as they are by the rest of Ismene's speech, it is not fanciful to interpret *ποῦ γνῶμης ποτ' εἶ*; in 42, as implying 'Think not on (such) desperate deeds'. In 61 Ismene says 'Ἄλλ' ἐννοεῖν χρὴ τοῦτο, κ. τ. λ. In 67-68 she concludes her plea with the words *τὸ γὰρ περισσὰ πράσσειν οὐκ ἔχει νοῦν οὐδένα*. From the point of view of Ismene *φρήν*, *φρονεῖν*, *νοῦς* abide not in Antigone; Ismene is thus at one with Kreon in interpretation of Antigone's (purposed) conduct, though the considerations which lead her to this view are somewhat different from those which influence him. Thus, at the outset, from Antigone's own sister, the one surviving member of her immediate family, comes the charge that what she purposes is lacking in wisdom, and we are impressed by the isolation of the heroine.

The burden, then, of Ismene's plea in 49-68 is 'Be not so thoughtless', 'Be not so foolish'. To make this clear, the poet lets Antigone herself thus sum up Ismene's speech (see 95-96, in Antigone's last utterance in this scene): 'But let me and the misguided thinking (*δυσβουλίαν*) that proceeds from me suffer this dread fate', or, more freely, 'Let me be as foolish as I will and suffer the dread consequences'.

Kreon is fond, from the first, of *φρήν*, *φρονεῖν*, and words of kindred meaning; to himself he is fount of all wisdom for Thebes and its people. Not specially significant, to be sure, is his use of *φρόνημα* in his entrance speech, in 168-169, where he praises the elders who constitute the Chorus 'because, though Oedipus was dead, with steadfast minds and thoughts (*ἐμπέδοις φρονήμασιν*) they tarried about the children of Oedipus'. But

<sup>1</sup> For my renderings I am indebted somewhat to Jebb.

<sup>2</sup> See below, page 314.

175-178, in the same speech, are important for us: 'Impossible is it', he says, 'to learn out and out any man's *ψυχὴν τε καὶ φρόνημα καὶ γνώμην* until he shall be seen under the test of occupancy of governmental positions and of administration of the laws'. When we interpret these verses in the light of the proud inaugural address in 178-191, we see that Kreon is claiming for himself a righteous *ψυχή*, correct *φρόνημα*, and impeccable *γνώμη*. In 179 he implies that his *βουλεύματα* are *ἄριστα*. All this he asserts in generalities in 175-191.

Then, having in 192-206 announced his decree forbidding the burial of Polynices, he says, in summing up (207), *τοιούνδ' ἐμὸν φρόνημα*, and he again asserts the rightness of his thinking by adding the words that make up the balance of his speech. Thus, in his peroration he uses *φρόνημα*, the most significant of the three words with which, in 176, he ushered in his inaugural address.<sup>1</sup>

At 223 the Guard enters.<sup>2</sup> In 278-279, after he has finished his long narrative (245-277), the Chorus says, 'O king, verily my mind has long been thinking (*ἡ ξύννοια βουλεύει πάλαι*) that this deed is something god-sent'. Thus, the first reaction of the Chorus, left to itself, unthreatened, uncowed, its first *φρόνημα*, is in sharp collision with Kreon's (175-210): the deed that so excites Kreon's wrath is to the Chorus a righteous deed, a deed sent on its way even by the gods. Kreon's reply is swift and to the point (280-283): 'Stop, ere by your speaking you fill me with wrath too, lest you be found at one time both mindless (*ἄνους*) and old, for you say things not to be

<sup>1</sup> The importance of *φρόνημα* in this speech of Kreon is emphasized by the fact that in 459 Sophocles makes Antigone use *φρόνημα* exactly as if she had heard Kreon's words here: see below, p. 305.

One other point may be noted here, not always, at any rate, noticed by editors. Kreon is not so sure after all as he would seem of the rightness of his *φρόνημα*: he protests too much, both here and in 639-680, in his appeal to his son. Kreon is not really a strong character: witness the quickness with which, in 1091-1107, he yields, spite of his bold words to Teiresias in 1033-1063.

<sup>2</sup> It may be fanciful to note that within the first three lines of his speech the Guard uses the word *φροντίς*: on his way to Kreon with his unwelcome news, says he, *πολλὰς . . . ἔσχον φροντίδων ἐπιστάσεις . . .* He at least knew not where wisdom lay. Yet he was wise with the wisdom of Socrates, in that he knew his own ignorance.

borne, in saying that the gods have forethought (*πρόνοιαν ἵσχειν*) in this corpse's behalf'. In effect he says, 'You understand not the *φρόνημα* of the gods'. In this speech again, dwelling on the *auri sacra fames*, he declares (299-301) that 'This trains minds out of their true nature (*ἐκδιδάσκει . . . φρένας*) and perverts minds that are good into setting themselves to deeds of shame'. In a word, says Kreon, the *φρήν* of him who buried Polynices is a corrupted *φρήν*, his *φρόνημα* is perverted.

In the stichomythy of 316-319 the Guard uses *ψυχή* and *φρένες* with reference to Kreon; the references are, however, colorless. But, in 323, after Kreon, losing his head in wrath, has charged the Guard with having buried Polynices, *καὶ ταῦτ' ἐπ' ἀργύρῳ γε τὴν ψυχὴν προδούς*,<sup>1</sup> the Guard, waxing bolder, cries:

ἦ δεινὸν ᾧ δοκεῖ γε καὶ ψευδῇ δοκεῖν.

'Alas, dread is it that he who thinks thinks in falsehoods too'. In 324 Kreon rejoins with *κόμψενέ νυν τὴν δόξαν*, 'let thy fancy play with "thinks" as it will'. Here the Guard plainly calls Kreon *ἄνους*, though, to be sure, he applies the epithet to him in connection with a side-issue, not in connection with the great theme of the play: Which is the better *φρόνημα*—to obey man or to obey god? Yet Kreon's error in connection with the side-issue is a by-product of his error with respect to the greater question which gives rise to the side-issue. Twice, then, thus far, once from the Chorus of Elders, once from the humble Guard, we have had a hint that Kreon is not as wise as he thinks: in each case Kreon, by terrorism, brushes aside that hint.

In the hymn in 334 ff. (the first stasimon), the Chorus makes its second utterance since it heard the news that Polynices had been buried in defiance of Kreon's decree (for the first see 278-279). This utterance, whose keynote is sounded in the famous words *πολλὰ τὰ δεινὰ* (334), is condemnatory of the act of him who had buried Polynices. Kreon has cowed the Chorus (278-279). One of the evidences of man's *δεινότης* is the fact that *ἀνεμόεν φρόνημα ἐδιδάξατο*

<sup>1</sup> There is a jeer here: 'You talk of wounds to my *ψυχή*, my *φρένες* (317-319): you have wholly *betrayed* your own *ψυχή*'.

(335). In themselves these words might well involve praise; the immediate context in fact conveys just this connotation.<sup>1</sup> But the other side of the thought, that man's δεινότης may well be an evil thing, the thought with which the Chorus began, comes to the fore again in 365-375, especially in 370-375: 'May he not be by the same hearth with me, may he not think as I think (ἐμοὶ . . . ἴσον . . . φρονῶν), the man, I mean, who doeth such deeds'. Here the Chorus condemns the φρόνημα of the unknown doer of the deed. At this very moment the Chorus sees Antigone, placed under arrest; hear its cry in 380-384:

οὐ δὴ πον σέ γ' ἀπιστοῦσαν  
τοῖς βασιλείοις ἀπάγουσι νόμοις  
καὶ ἐν ἀφροσύνῃ καθελόντες;

'Surely, surely not *you* as disloyal to the laws ordained by the king they bring and as caught in folly' ?<sup>2</sup> The significant words of the question begin with ἀπιστοῦσαν and end with ἐν ἀφροσύνῃ καθελόντες. Here, then, we have from the Chorus the clear-cut statement that to disobey Kreon's decrees is ἀφροσύνη, 'mindlessness'.

When the Guard entered the first time, in 223 ff., he used within three verses φροντίς.<sup>3</sup> Now, again, within his first four verses, he uses ἐπίνοια and γνώμη, in verses that are, to me at least, full of significance: 'O King, naught is there against which man should take his oath, for after-thought belies his first intent' (ψεῦδει γὰρ ἡ 'πίνοια τὴν γνώμην). He illustrates his thought by 390 ff.: 'I swore I would never come to this presence again (329): yet here I am'. Not even so keen a critic as Jebb noticed that in these words of the Guard Sophocles forestalled (summed up) the outcome of the play. Kreon had said in effect (176-210): 'Never will I bury Polynices'. In a very real and tragic sense ἔψευσε Κρέοντι ἡ ἐπίνοια<sup>4</sup> τὴν γνώμην.

In 450-470 Antigone makes the great speech that figures so

<sup>1</sup> δεινόν τι, 334, may be either a compliment or the reverse.

<sup>2</sup> I have sought to give in the translation the involved word-order of the Greek.

<sup>3</sup> See above, page 302, and n. 2.

<sup>4</sup> As thus applied to Kreon ἐπίνοια would remind one of Ἐπιμηθεύς, the man who thought too late!

largely in all discussions of the poet's purpose in this play. Here we need note only 458-460: 'For breaking *these* I was not minded, through fear of any mere man's thinking (*ἀνδρὸς . . . φρόνημα*), among the Gods to pay the penalty'. Here (1) the issue is sharply drawn between the *κηρύγμαθ'* . . . *ἄγραπτα κάσφαλῇ θεῶν νόμιμα* and the *φρόνημα ἀνδρός (τινος)*. (2) Antigone is made by the poet to talk exactly as if she had heard Kreon's proud words in 207, *τοιόνδ' ἐμὸν φρόνημα*.<sup>1</sup> Verse 458, under a veil of courtesy, is sharp enough; at 469-470, Antigone, throwing off all disguise, says *σοὶ δ' εἰ δοκῶ νῦν μῶρὰ δρῶσα τυγχάνειν, σχεδὸν τι μῶρῳ μωρίαν ὀφλισκάνω*. It is *φρόνημα* against *φρόνημα*, the *φρόνημα* of one embodying in conduct the eternal laws of the gods against the *φρόνημα* of a mere mortal who has forgotten the will of the gods.

After two verses by the Chorus, Kreon makes a long reply (473-496). His very first words are 'But know that the minds that are over-stubborn (*τὰ σκλήρ' ἄγαν φρονήματα*) are laid lowest'. Here *φρονήματα* is a Roland for Antigone's Oliver in 459. Four verses further on he says, 'He is not wont to be high-minded (*φρονεῖν μέγ'*) who is his neighbors' slave'. Opposition to Kreon's plans by any one seems to him *ἀφροσύνη*. So, in 491-494 he describes Ismene as *λυσσῶσα . . . οὐδ' ἐπήβολος φρενῶν*, and classes her among those 'who devise all things wrongly in the dark'. In 510 he cries to Antigone *σὺ δ' οὐκ ἐπαιδεῖ, τῷδε χωρὶς εἰ φρονεῖς*; Of *their* right thinking, at least in public, he had made sure (281 ff.).

The next passage that concerns us is 555-558. In the dialogue of 536 ff., conducted at first in distichs (536-547), presently in stichomythy (548-554), Ismene asserts, Antigone denies, that Ismene had had share in the burial of Polynices; though she had not been strong enough to *act* with Antigone, Ismene has the strength now to *suffer* with her. Now come 555-558: ANT. '<You may not share my fate> for you chose to live, I to die'. IS. 'But not with my words unspoken'. 'True', says Ismene, 'I left you to die, but only after a full expression of my views', or, 'Yes, but not until I had pointed out how unwise your purposed conduct was, till I had done

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 302, n. 1. For an example of the retort courteous deliberately made by Antigone, compare 523 with 522 (*οὔτοι . . . οὔτοι*). See Humphreys' edition of the play, page xlvii.

what I could to deter you'. The reference is to Ismene's impassioned plea in 49 ff., beginning with *φρόνησον* (49) and ending with *οὐκ ἔχει νοῦν οὐδένα* (68). Antigone's next utterance Jebb translates by "One world approved thy wisdom, another mine". To this Ismene answers: 'And yet we are equally in error'. With Antigone's reply in 559-560 this dialogue ends, and Kreon comments on it (561-562) by calling the sisters *ἄνοι*, 'mindless', the one 'newly', the other 'ever since her life began'. To this Ismene replies (563-564): 'Verily, O King, such mind as blooms for them abides not for (with) them that do (fare) ill, but steps away from them'.

In the second stasimon (583 ff.) the Chorus dwells on the long story of suffering that marked the history of the Labdakidai, 'sorrows heaping high the sorrows of them that had died'. Hope there had been that Antigone and Ismene would escape, but (602-604)

κατ' αὖ νιν φοινία θεῶν τῶν νεπτέρων  
ἀμᾶ κόνις<sup>1</sup> λόγου τ' ἄνοια καὶ φρενῶν ἐρινύς.

'But down these two, in their turn, the gods below reap, the gods and their dust, and mindlessness of words, and frenzy of spirit'. In 620-624 the Chorus says: 'For with wisdom hath some one revealed the famous word, The thing that is evil seemeth good (*δοκεῖν*) some time to him whose mind (wits: *φρένας*) god driveth to destruction'.

So, by this point, Ismene, Antigone's sister, Kreon and the Chorus (all the representatives of public opinion) have united in calling Antigone *ἄνοια* and in characterizing her conduct as *ἀφροσύνη*. The result of such folly, says the Chorus thrice in 614-625, must be *ἄτη*, *ἄται*.

<sup>1</sup> I prefer to keep *κόνις* with the MSS: see Jebb's fine defence of it. The fact that all the subjects of *κατ'* . . . *ἀμᾶ* follow the verb makes the dislocation of the metaphor easier. Further, *τῶν νεπτέρων*, set immediately before *ἀμᾶ κόνις*, makes *κόνις* at once easy and highly effective to one who recalls, by ear or eye, the earlier part of the play. The dislocation of the metaphor proves the emotion of the Chorus: in its excitement, lost wholly to reason, it belittles the obligation of burial, the great issue of the play. To replace *κόνις* by *κοπίς* is to spoil a wonderful phrase, that only a great writer could venture. *κόνις λόγου τ' ἄνοια καὶ φρενῶν ἐρινύς* logically = 'the dust sprinkled through frenzy of the wit, and with senselessness of speech'. Far indeed has the Chorus travelled with Kreon.



At 631 Haimon appears. Before he can or will speak, Kreon addresses him, hinting plainly that in all that he himself wills or does he counts on his son's acquiescence, his son's continued love. Haimon's first speech is a masterpiece of diplomacy (635-638): 'Father, yours am I, and so with counsels good in mine interest (μοι γνώμας ἔχων χρηστὰς) you set them out straight; them I at least will follow, for no marriage in my eyes will ever rightly be a richer blessing to bear away than your good guidance (σοῦ καλῶς ἡγουμένου)'. As has been often noted, ἔχων and σοῦ καλῶς ἡγουμένου Kreon may interpret, indeed does interpret as causal in connotation, whereas Haimon means 'if you have', 'if you guide well'. The first two verses of Kreon's answer (639 ff.) next concern us: 'Yes, my son, yes, this 'tis meet to keep ever in one's heart, that all things else should stand behind a father's thought'. 'What a father thinks is right', is his creed, as before (174-210) it was 'What a ruler thinks is right'.<sup>1</sup> His self-complacency is as yet undisturbed: has not the one person who sought to defy his will been discovered, and is she not in his power? So, again in this speech, in 648-651, he appeals to Haimon thus: 'Do not ever, O my son, fling forth your mind (wits: τὰς φρένας) under the spell of pleasure, for a woman's sake, since you know', etc. When Kreon's speech is done (680), ere Haimon can reply, the Chorus says (681-682): 'To us indeed, unless we have been robbed of our wits by the passage of time,<sup>2</sup> you seem to speak wisely (φρονούντως, mindfully, wittingly) of the things of which you speak'. Thus a second time the Chorus ranges itself clearly on the side of Kreon: *his* will is wisdom, disregard of that will is folly. The first time was in 381-383, in the first words of the Chorus to Antigone.

The opening verses of Haimon's reply to his father's long appeal are significant (683-691): 'Father, it is the Gods that plant in men minds (reason, φρένας)—highest of possessions, as many as there are. To deny that there is wisdom in your

<sup>1</sup> In this same speech, in 667-668, Kreon gives his definition of *right thinking by a subject*: the subject must obey the ruler καὶ σμικρὰ καὶ δίκαια καὶ τὰναντία. Nowhere does he more plainly set forth his views! Yet he protests too much: see above, page 302, note 1.

<sup>2</sup> Possibly there is an allusion here to Kreon's taunt in 280-281.

sayings would lie beyond *my* powers, beyond *my* knowledge. Yet, since another too might have right on his side <in his thinking>, it is therefore my task, by nature set, to note, betimes, in your interest, what men do, what men say <with respect to your views and your conduct>; <this you cannot do yourself> for the man of the people will not say before you such words as would offend your ears'. Haimon's effort to be tactful, to be diplomatic in his opposition to his father (oppose him he must) makes his meaning, at first sight, less transparent than it might be: some things he leaves to inference. 'In this way', continues Haimon, in effect, 'I know that our city thinks you wrong, and believes the maiden right (692-695) in saving her own brother's body from mutilation (696-698): aye, for this, men say, she should have golden honor (699-700). Believe not, therefore, that right lies only in what *you* think and in what *you* say (705-706)'. Then come these striking verses (707-711):

ὅστις γὰρ αὐτὸς ἢ φρονεῖν μόνος δοκεῖ,  
ἢ γλώσσαν, ἣν οὐκ ἄλλος, ἢ ψυχὴν ἔχειν,  
οὔτοι, διαπτυχθέντες, ὤφθησαν κenoί.  
ἀλλ' ἄνδρα, κεῖ τις ἢ σοφός, τὸ μανθάνειν  
πόλλ' αἰσχρὸν οὐδὲν<sup>1</sup> κ. τ. λ.

719-723, parts of the same speech, are also pertinent to our discussion.

That Haimon's appeal has had its effect on the Chorus is clear from 724-725. Less sure of its ground than when in 681-682 it unreservedly praised Kreon's doctrine of the right of kings to order, the duty of subjects to obey, without questioning the rightness or wrongness of kingly order, the Chorus now suggests a compromise between Kreon and his son: 'each of you has right in his thinking, in his speaking: each should learn from the other'. To this Kreon replies furiously (726-727): 'Shall men as old as I be taught to think (*φρονεῖν*) by one of nature such as his?' In the stichomythy that follows (730 ff.) Haimon, finding his father intractable, at last plainly says what has been in his mind from the first (see on 635-

<sup>1</sup> This is precisely the lesson his experiences ultimately teach Kreon.—One thinks here of Solon's famous saying *γηράσκω δ' αἰεὶ πολλὰ διδασκόμενος*.

636) in 753<sup>1</sup>: 'Wherein is it a threat, to make answer to empty thoughts (*πρὸς κενὰς γνώμας λέγειν*)?' This calls forth from Kreon the significant rejoinder (754):

*κλαίων φρενώσεις, ὦν φρεῶν αὐτὸς κενός.*

'To your sorrow will *you* put mind <in me>, yourself empty of mind'. Haimon replies (755), 'If you were not my father, I should have said you think not well (*εὖ φρονεῖν*)'. I hope I am not merely riding a hobby when I see in Haimon's last speech (762-765) once more the *φρήν* motif: note *τοῦτο μὴ δόξης*, 'Think not *that*, at least <whatever else strange and wrong you are minded to think>', etc. So I find significance in the Chorus's use of *νοῦς*, in 767, of Haimon, and in Kreon's *δράτω, φρονεῖτω μείζον ἢ κατ' ἄνδρ' ἰών* (768), said of Haimon, and in his grim *γνώσεται* (779), used with respect to what Antigone is likely to learn concerning her conduct.

Heretofore we have had the *φρήν, φρονεῖν* motif mainly with respect to the conduct of Antigone, but to some extent also of the conduct of Kreon. Now the Chorus, dwelling on the power of Eros, introduces the motif with respect to the conduct of Haimon toward his father in the interview just ended: <sup>2</sup> note 793, 'You, Eros, draw aside the minds (*φρένας*) even of the righteous into unrighteousness, for their marring'.

In 801 ff. there is a hint of rebellion—in spirit, at least—, by the Chorus against Kreon. Something of this spirit, perhaps, lingers in 816-822. The indecision of the Chorus, which renders it unable long to keep any definite position, leads to 834-837, which Antigone interprets as a rebuke (839). In 853-856 (which I interpret as Jebb does) the Chorus swings towards its position in 601-603: the sense is, 'in part you are paying for your own recklessness (want of wisdom), in part, too, for your father's lack of wisdom'. In its last

<sup>1</sup> I keep the order of verses as given in the MSS (see Jebb). Verses 744-745 sum up the play:

KR. *Ἀμαρτάνω γὰρ τὰς ἐμὰς ἀρχὰς σέβων;*

HAI. *Οὐ γὰρ σέβεις, τιμὰς γε τὰς θεῶν πατρῶν.*

So do 748-749: they plainly say that to defend Antigone is to defend Kreon himself and the rights of the gods as well.

<sup>2</sup> This conduct, be it noted, was conditioned by Kreon's own basic error: see the discussion above, p. 302, of the language of the Guard to Kreon in 323.

words to Antigone (871-875) the Chorus states the whole crux of the play—the conflict of man's two duties, the duty to divine authority, the duty to human authority—and clearly ranges itself with Kreon, in its closing words (875): *σὲ δ' αὐτόγνωτος ὤλεσ' ὀργά*, 'You your own self-knowing temper brought to ruin'. Antigone, says the chorus, essayed to know by herself what was right, heedless of the minds and thoughts of others: this self-knowing, this *μέγα φρονεῖν*, has wrought her doom.

To this point, then, in the conflict of *φρένες*, of *φρονήματα*, Kreon is apparently wholly victorious. To be sure, the Chorus has had its misgivings (211-212, 724-725, 801 ff., and perhaps 816-822), but outwardly it has, in its final words to Antigone (853-856, 871-875), clearly sided with Kreon. The Guard at 323 had criticized Kreon, only to be driven off with a threat. Haimon gave voice (687-700) to popular disapproval of Kreon's edict, but this the king disdains to meet (in 209-307 he had forestalled such a statement). Haimon had then for himself flatly condemned Kreon's thinking (743-757), only to be cruelly taunted by his father. To all appearances, then, the human law was prevailing: Antigone was on her way to punishment, and naught as yet had happened to relieve the strange mystery—that obedience to the highest law, the divine law, was bringing only a grievous death. The voice of the gods has not yet been heard in decision between the thoughts—the *φρονήματα*—whose collision is the theme of the play; and Kreon can say, self-satisfied<sup>1</sup> (889), 'for I am holy-handed so far at least as this maiden is concerned'.

Antigone, going forth to die, utters the famous speech (891-928) which contains those verses so often discussed, 904-920. For my own part I cannot believe that Sophocles wrote 904-920. At first blush, however, 904, *καίτοι σ' ἐγὼ τίμησα τοῖς φρονούσιν εὖ*, bears on its face evidence of its genuineness in the phrase *τοῖς φρονούσιν εὖ*<sup>2</sup>, i. e. in the recurrence of the *φρῆν*, *φρονεῖν* motif. But this argument will work equally well the other way: the insertion of such a significant phrase is precisely the sort of thing an interpolator would do

<sup>1</sup> He protests too much *here* as in 775 and earlier. He is not as sure as he seems. See above, page 302, note 1.

<sup>2</sup> I construe *εὖ* twice in this verse.

(see Professor Shorey's fine presentation of this point in his review of Hackforth, *The Authorship of the Platonic Epistles*, in *The Classical Weekly* 8. 174). In the closing verses of this speech Antigone affirms her unwavering belief in the rightness of her position (924, and again in 926-927). This the Chorus sees clearly (929-930). Once again, in her very last words, Antigone affirms the rightness of her conduct (943): 'See what I suffer, τὴν εὐσεβίαν σεβίσασα'.

After the Chorus has sung the fourth stasimon (944-987), the voice of the gods begins to make itself heard, and the *περιπέτεια*<sup>1</sup> begins. Teiresias enters (988). At once Kreon, not so sure of himself as he had seemed (cf. p. 302, n. 1), senses danger (note νέον in his first question, 991). When Teiresias has bidden Kreon to hearken and obey *his* word, we have this significant colloquy (993-996):

KR. Οὐκ οὖν πάρος γε σῆς ἀπεισάτουν φρονόσ.

TEI. Τοιγὰρ δι' ὀρθῆς τήνδε ναυκληρεῖς πόλιν.

KR. Ἐχω πεπονθὼς μαρτυρεῖν ὀνήσιμα.

TEI. Φρόνει βεβῶς αὐτὸν νῦν ἐπὶ ξυροῦ τύχης.

Here Teiresias plainly tells Kreon that he has prospered thus far in his rule of Thebes only because he had heeded the *divine* will as expressed to him through Teiresias, and he hints that, for some disregard of that will, he is now in danger. Teiresias's long explanation (998-1032) begins with the words '*Learn* thou wilt, hearing the signs of *my* art'. Kreon is to learn now a higher wisdom than his own; in 1015 he hears the dread words, hurled at him with startling suddenness:

καὶ ταῦτα τῆς σῆς ἐκ φρονόσ νοσεῖ πόλις!

'And all this sickness of our city springs from *your* mind (*your* thinking)'. The φρήν on which he has prided himself so much has been fraught with woe to his city, in the forfeiture of favor divine (1019-1022). Then comes Teiresias's injunction (1023-1032):

ταῦτ' οὖν, τέκνον, φρόνησον.<sup>2</sup> ἀνθρώποισι γὰρ

τοῖς πᾶσι κοινόν ἐστι τοῦ ἔξαμαρτάνειν.

<sup>1</sup> On the meaning of *περιπέτεια*, see Butcher, *Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art*, 323.

<sup>2</sup> Ismene's word to her sister, in 49! See above, pp. 300-301.

ἐπεὶ δ' ἁμάρτη, κείνος οὐκέτ' ἔστ' ἀνὴρ  
 ἄβουλος οὐδ' ἀνολβος, ὅστις ἐς κακὸν  
 πεσὼν ἀκείται μηδ' ἀκίνητος πέλει.  
 αὐθαδία τοι σκαϊότῃ τ' ὀφλισκάνει.<sup>1</sup>  
 εὖ σοι φρονήσας εὖ λέγω· τὸ μανθάνειν δ'  
 ἥδιστον εὖ λέγοντος, εἰ κέρδος λέγοι.

What a swift and complete reversal of the situation! *φρόνησον*, said by Ismene to Antigone in 49, to induce *her* to give over a purpose unwise, is said now by Teiresias, spokesman of the gods, to the complacent and victorious Kreon; *αὐθαδία*, charged by the Chorus against Antigone (875), is charged now by Teiresias against Kreon (1028)!

In a blustering speech (1033-1047) Kreon refuses to *think* as Teiresias would have him think (1023); he sets his own knowledge (1043-1044: εὖ γὰρ οἶδ' κ. τ. λ.) against that of Teiresias and the gods, and plainly hints (1045-1047) that the latter, having put his 'wisdom' to a wrong use, will suffer a shameful fall.<sup>2</sup> This leads to the following dialogue (1048-1052): TEI. 'Does any mortal know, does any consider, how much the best of blessings is good counsel (εὐβουλία)?' KR. 'Best is it, I ween, as far as not to think (μὴ φρονεῖν) is fullest mischief'. TEI. 'Yet this is the very sickness wherewith you are by nature full'. Since Antigone talked so scornfully of her own *δυσβουλία* (95), events have shown that her *δυσβουλία* and Teiresias's *εὐβουλία* (obedience to the law divine) are one. 1063 and 1064, too, are for us significant:

KR. ὥς μὴ 'μπολήσων ἴσθι τὴν ἐμὴν φρένα.

TEI. ἀλλ' εὖ γέ τοι κάτισθι<sup>3</sup> κ. τ. λ.

The knowledge that Kreon is now to gain is, that all his previous thinking has been wrong, and that for the error of that

<sup>1</sup> Compare Antigone's words to Kreon, 469-470.

<sup>2</sup> The charge of bribery here is parallel to Kreon's use of the same charge against the Guard (322).

<sup>3</sup> Here Teiresias by his compound verb *κάτισθι* outdoes Kreon's *ἴσθι* (the movement, in both Latin and Greek, is apt to be the other way, from the compound to the simple verb: compare e. g. Antigone 1024-1025 *ἐξαμαρτάνειν* . . . *ἀμάρτη*).

thinking he will atone by deaths in his own household (1064-1079).<sup>1</sup> The seer's last words (1089-1090) bid Kreon have

τὸν νοῦν . . . ἀμείνω τῶν φρενῶν ἢ νῦν φέρει.

Kreon, sore dismayed, yields; once so (apparently) self-sufficient, he, first by implication (1095-1097), then in set terms (1098), asks counsel of the Chorus, whose thought he had at first so roughly rejected (278-281). This counsel comes first in general terms (1098), εὐβουλίας δεῖ . . . λαβεῖν; then, presently (1100-1101), εὐβουλία is defined in terms of a complete reversal of all that hitherto Kreon had thought so wise. Against this advice he struggles (1102), only to be told by the Chorus (1104) that 'swift-footed harms sent by the gods cut short the foolish-minded (τοὺς κακόφρονας)'. Convinced against his will (1105-1106), Kreon now (1108 ff.), his δόξα changed (1111), seeks with all speed to undo what he had done to punish Antigone, saying, as he departs (1113-1114), 'I fear that it is best to consummate one's life in the keeping of the established laws'. In view of what has happened since Teiresias's entrance (988) Kreon has no need to define *which* laws he has in mind. One set of laws, surely, he had respected, yes, overmuch!

After the ὑπόρχημα (1115-1154) the Messenger enters, to tell of the deaths of Antigone and Haimon. After gloomy general reflections on the uncertainty of human destiny (1155-1171), he then, prompted by the Chorus (1172), tells his tale. That tale closes with four verses (1240-1243) most important for us: 'Dead, with arms about the dead, he lies, having gained the bridal consummations—hapless youth—in the halls of Hades; and he hath shown among mankind that lack of counsel (ἀβουλία) is direst evil laid on man'. Whereas up to 988 the ἀβουλία seemed all Antigone's, now a humble messenger hesitates not to condemn the ἀβουλία of his king. So, when Kreon reenters at 1257, bearing his son's body, the Chorus unhesitatingly sees in what has befallen him οὐκ ἀλλοτρία ἄτη; Kreon has suffered αὐτὸς ἀμαρτών. That Kreon's own spirit is broken, that he has given up the confidence in his own wisdom

<sup>1</sup> We may note γυνῆ, said of Kreon (1089); it is speedily followed by ἐπιστάμεσθα (1092), said by the Chorus, and by ἔγνωκα (1095), said by Kreon. One recalls γινώσεται (789), said by Kreon of Antigone.

he once professed, his first words show (1261-1267): note the recurrence here of the *φρήν* motif:

ὦ,  
φρενῶν δυσφρόνων<sup>1</sup> ἁμαρτήματα  
στερεὰ θανατόεντ'.  
ὦ κτανόντας τε καὶ  
θανόντας βλέποντες ἐμφυλίου.  
ἡμοὶ ἐμῶν ἄνολβα βουλευμάτων.  
ὦ παῖ, νέος νέω ξὺν μόρῳ,  
αἰαὶ αἰαὶ,  
ἔθανες, ἀπελύθης,  
ἐμαῖς οὐδὲ σαῖσι δυσβουλίαις.

So in his next utterance (1272) he says οἱμοί, ἔχω μαθὼν δειλίας. Eurydice's last words, as reported by the Ἐξάγγελος (1304-1305), heap further blame on Kreon; he again himself confesses his guilt (at 1323-1324). In his last utterance in the play (1339-1346) Kreon once more admits his unwisdom, and his responsibility for the deaths of son and wife, though he wrought those deaths οὐχ ἐκών. Then, that we may not miss the *φρήν* motif, the Chorus, as it departs, says (1347-1354):

πολλῷ τὸ φρονεῖν εὐδαιμονίας  
πρῶτον ὑπάρχει· χρὴ δὲ τὰ γ' εἰς θεοὺς  
μηδὲν ἀσεπτεῖν·<sup>2</sup> μεγάλοι δὲ λόγοι  
μεγάλας πληγὰς τῶν ὑπεραύχων  
ἀποτίσαντες  
γῆρα τὸ φρονεῖν ἐδίδαξαν.

'To think is far the primal part of happiness by favor divine (*εὐδαιμονίας*), and man should never lack in reverence toward the gods.<sup>3</sup> Prideful words of boastful men exact the penalty of mighty blows, and in the fulness of time thinking aright they teach'. The last words to ring upon our ears, to make claim on our minds are *φρονεῖν* and *ἐδίδαξαν*. Yet Jebb, splendid critic that he is, can find nothing better to say on *φρονεῖν* in 1353 than "so soon after 1347: cp. on 76, 625 (*ἐκτὸς ἅτας*), 956 (*κερτομίους*)".

<sup>1</sup> φρενῶν δυσφρόνων = mentium dementium; compare mentes . . . dementes, Ennius, Annales 203 (Vahlen).

<sup>2</sup> This recalls—in violent contrast—Antigone's τὴν εὐσεβίαν σεβίσασα.

<sup>3</sup> Contrast the Chorus's words at 873-875.



So, then, throughout the play speaker after speaker dwells on the thing he thinketh wise, he deemeth right under the peculiar conditions obtaining. For nearly a thousand verses Antigone's claim that she is right finds no outspoken and unwavering support save from her lover Haimon; that support the king brushes at last insultingly aside. The elders of the State (the Chorus), the king's natural counsellors, have no sure thought: in any event they are too timid to oppose the king, even though their natural reaction (Jebb, page xxvi), is one of disapproval of his decree. To Haimon's statement that the *πόλις*, the people, believe Antigone right Kreon gives no heed. To all appearances Kreon has won: the laws of man have triumphed over the laws of God, those laws reliance on which had prompted Antigone to her deed.

But in this play, as so often in the drama, it is brightest before the darkness. With startling suddenness comes the message of Teiresias: Kreon's sun is set. His wisdom is foolishness; Antigone's foolishness is wisdom supreme. There is none now so poor as to do reverence to Kreon's *φρόν*, to his *ψυχή*, to his *φρόνημα*. His folly and his suffering are inseparably linked together—first by the gods, through Teiresias, then by the Chorus, then by the messenger, then by Eurydice, then by Kreon himself, and then in the final words of the play again by the Chorus, 'Prideful words of boastful men exact the penalty of mighty blows and in the fulness of time thinking aright they teach'.

Can anyone really doubt what the poet thought of Antigone's conduct? of Kreon's conduct?<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Some reader of this paper may ask whether such a recurrent motif can be found in any other extant (Greek) play. To my mind it matters little or nothing whether one can or cannot be found: at another time I shall make a search through other plays of Sophocles, at least, and mayhap in Aeschylus. One rebels at times against the tyranny of the demand for parallels.

However, I have two parallels at hand, and both from one play—the Andria of Terence (a play which goes back to two plays of Menander: see its Prologue 9 ff.). From end to end that play is concerned with a marriage, originally set for the day of the play itself (*hodie*). Though the consent of Chremes, father of the bride to be, has been withdrawn, Simo, father of the groom, Pamphilus, pretends, for reasons of his

own, that the marriage is to take place, and at once, *hodie*, 'to-day'. This fact he communicates to Davus, his son's slave, in 189: *nunc hic dies (hodie, in noun form, as subject) aliam vitam adfert, alios mores postulat*, and later to his son, in 254 (as quoted by the son, Pamphilus): *uxor tibi ducendast, Pamphile, hodie . . para, abi domum*. Cf. Pamphilus's words in 238: *uxorem decrerat dare sese hodie mihi*.

There is not space to quote in full all the other passages in which the motif recurs; I can only refer the reader to 301, 321, 322, 348, 354, 370, 388, 410, 413, 418, 513-514, 529, 534, 577, 582, 603, 654, 657, 706, 916. The motif is found in the words of no less than seven characters: Simo, 196, 388, 418, 529, 577, 916; Davus, 354, 410, 513-514, 582, 706; Pamphilus, 238, 254, 348, 657; Charinus, 301, 321, 322, 370, 654; Byrria, the slave of Charinus, 413; Chremes, father of the bride to be, 534; Mysis, slave of Glycerium, beloved of Pamphilus, whom he does, in fact, finally marry, *hodie*, 268 ff. (an exceptionally fine passage, psychologically sound and delicate).

Yet, on 196 Professors Fairclough and Sturtevant both declare that *hodie* is there colloquial, with no temporal force. The former bids us "Translate here as *now*"; the latter says "omit in translation".

In this play, again, there is a *iam*, 'immediately', motif. Davus, by excessive cleverness, has involved his young master in sore trouble. Reproached for this by his master, Pamphilus, Davus says, in 617, *At iam expediam*, and, in 622, *Iam aliquid dispiciam*. In 682 Pamphilus cries, in answer to a *Faciam* from Davus, *At iam hoc opust*; to this, in 683, Davus replies *At iam hoc tibi inventum dabo*. In the very next verse, Mysis, entering from her mistress's house, and speaking to those within, says *Iam ubi ubi erit, inventum tibi curabo et mecum adductum*: her *iam* must have seemed to the audience an echo of the *iam* of Pamphilus and that of Davus. Meeting Pamphilus, Mysis says to him (687), *Orare iussit, si se ames, era, iam ut ad sese venias*. Compare also 704: *PA. Iam hoc opus est. DA. Quin iam habeo*. Davus's *ocius* in 724 and 731 may be described as *iam* in the comparative degree. As far off as 776, perhaps, we have an echo of all this in Davus's words to Mysis about the baby: *Nunc adeo, ut tu sis sciens, nisi puerum tollis, iam ego hunc in mediam viam provolvam*.